

THE GREAT MARQUIS.

CHAPTER V.

“He held his castle in the north,
Hard by the thundering Spey;
And a thousand vassals dwelt around,
All of his kindred they.” AYTOON.

HE Marquis had but little time to sorrow for Kilpont's death, his army had been much diminished by the Highlanders slipping away home to their wives and families, and by Lord Kilpont's men all deserting in order to follow the body of their murdered young chief to the tomb.

He could not think therefore of defending Perth against two or three armies, and he marched accordingly into Aberdeenshire, to try and persuade the Gordons to join him. One of the clan, a clever soldier, Colonel Nathaniel Gordon, answered gladly to his call, but the head of the house, the Marquis of Huntly, and his sons hung back. Lord Ludovic—he of whom I have already spoken—was again in arms against Montrose. Ludovic was the wildest of the wild, and was constantly changing sides; he had not forgotten his defeat some years before, nor was he likely to forget it in a hurry, for he was again completely defeated by the Marquis, and Aberdeen fell into the hands of the Royalists.

But Montrose had not been two days in Aberdeen when he heard that Argyle was close behind him with a powerful army. Montrose, with his small undisciplined force of wild Highlanders and Irish, did not chose to wait for him, and hastily retreated from the town. The government of Edinburgh was beginning in fact to get extremely frightened at the success of the royal lieutenant, and they proclaimed him a traitor, setting a price upon his head, and commanding Argyle to bring him back either dead or alive. But this was not quite so easy. Montrose now led the Covenanting generals such a chase as they had never undertaken before. Surrounded as he was by enemies, he dodged them and foiled them on every side: a perfect mountaineer

himself, he led his men through passes of the Grampians where hardly the shepherds dared to venture; and whenever he could slip unperceived past the enemy he would dart back into Aberdeenshire, with the faint hope of persuading the Gordons to join him.

But during these wonderful marches, which were considered as being amongst his greatest feats, he once narrowly escaped being destroyed altogether. He had taken the castle of Fyvie, in Aberdeenshire, and had strongly intrenched himself, when the two armies of Argyle and Lothian surrounded him in overwhelming numbers. Without artillery, with very little ammunition, the few Gordons who had joined him having deserted him, Montrose saw that he was on the brink of destruction. But if he felt anxious he took care that his men should not see it.

Already the enemy were clambering up the intrenchments on all sides, when Montrose called out cheerfully to a young Irish officer, "Come, O'Kyan, what are you about? Can't you drive those troublesome fellows from our defences and see that they don't disturb us again?"

As if it was the easiest thing in the world.

O'Kyan immediately shouted to his men to follow him, and, animated by his example, they rushed on the assailants and drove them headlong, foot and horse together, down the hill.

Argyle was by this time rather tired of pursuing an enemy which he could never get hold of; winter was at hand; already the hills were covered with snow, and Montrose had plunged again into the deepest recesses of the mountains of Badenoch, whither Argyle had no desire whatever to follow him. It was a thing unheard of in those days to fight in the winter time, and the chieftain of the Campbells, who at all times loved intrigue better than the battle-field, threw up the command of his army and quietly settled himself at his own castle of Inverary, firmly believing that the royal army would be forced to remain quiet during the frost and snow. It seemed, indeed, as if little was to be feared from Montrose; the violent fatigues he had endured had brought on an attack of illness which proved very nearly fatal. Numbers of his followers had left him, their health having given way under the hardships of cold, weariness, and hunger, which they were all obliged to suffer. With his army thus diminished, with the winter coming on, Montrose was still as eager and hopeful as ever; and like an eagle in his eyrie was watching for an opportunity to pounce upon his enemies.

One day a Highlander presented himself to the Marquis with important information. He knew, he said, all the secret passes into Argyleshire, and he promised to lead Montrose's army to Inverary before the master of that stately castle could know of his approach. It would be a glorious feat indeed if Montrose could at one blow destroy the power of the Marquis of Argyle, the supreme head of the Covenanting party.

Little did that deluded nobleman guess what was coming upon him. He had often said that he would not for a thousand crowns that any one should know the secret passes which led to his old feudal stronghold. What then were his feelings when he learnt from the terrified shepherds that Montrose, who he thought was far away beyond the Tay and the Dochart, was within a day's march of him? Hardly a month or two before, the Marquis had performed a march of twenty-four miles over the Grampian mountains, through frost and snow, to surprise him at Dunkeld, and here he was now at his own gates, where he flattered himself that no enemy could penetrate. He did not hesitate now what to do, but embarking on the lake he made his escape as he best could to Edinburgh. The army of Montrose, consisting of different clans, Camerons, Stuarts, Macdonalds, Ogilvies, all hated the Campbells, and were eager to revenge the burning and wasting of their country by Argyle's troops. They burnt and ravaged all that came in their way, and still we may see on Loch Goil the ruins of Castle Campbell; and we are told that it was destroyed by the Ogilvies in revenge for the destruction of the "Bonnie House of Airlie" by Argyle himself.

The Campbells had a favourite saying, "It is a far cry to Lochow," which meant to express that no enemy could penetrate into their territories. Montrose taught them that their "far cry" must for the future be but an empty boast. He stayed at Inverary till January, and when no good was to be got by staying longer he returned to Glen Urquhart through Lochaber.

When he was gone Argyle came home again, and proclaimed to everybody who would listen to him that Montrose had run away. He sent for a kinsman, Sir Duncan Campbell of Auchinbreck, and with his help he soon assembled a fine army, with which he set off immediately in pursuit of the Great Marquis. This news was brought to Montrose by a loyal Gaelic bard called Ian Lom Macdonnell.

The Marquis would hardly at first believe the information, and exclaimed :

“ Argyle dare not pursue me through Lochaber.”

However, when he found it was true he resolved at once not to wait for him, and after holding a council of war with his Highland chiefs, he settled to retrace his steps and surprise the Covenanting army. It was a splendid march that he made, and I cannot better describe it than in the words of Mr. Napier : “ It was the depth of winter, and the mountains were covered with snow ; moreover in that wildest district of the Highlands no military stations or roads then existed. Nor did he conduct his army by the usual or direct passes. Startling the herds of deer where armed men had never yet been led, they sought their way up the rugged bed of the Tarff, across the steep ridges of the awful Corryarrick, now plunging into the valley of the Spey, now crossing the wild mountains from Glen Roy to the Spean, and stayed not until from the skirts of Ben Nevis they saw before them the yet bloodless shore of Loch Eil, and the frowning towers of Inverlochy.”

It was on that same bright winter’s morning that their presence was discovered by Argyle’s army and reported to be a scattered body of Highlanders, some Camerons and their chief M’Ilduy, or Stuarts of Appin, perhaps, who had strayed by accident to the neighbourhood of the Covenanting army, and who should speedily be punished for their presumption. Argyle had gone on board his galley, which was lying at anchor on the lake, and was still discussing the subject with the gentlemen who stood round him, when suddenly there swept across the still waters of the blue lake those peculiar trumpet notes which were always played to salute the royal standard. Argyle started with surprise, for the sound told him that his gallant enemy was there in person, and it was the royal army that was gathered on those heights to dispute his further progress.

The battle began the moment the sun was up, and was fought with great courage on both sides. The royal army was, however, victorious ; Sir Duncan Campbell, a valiant soldier, was killed, and Argyle, who had kept aloof from the combat on account of a hurt in his arm, made his escape in his galley with all possible expedition.

Before the battle began, Ian Lom Macdonnell asked the Marquis to give him his reward for having faithfully guided his army over the trackless mountains, and Montrose gladly allowed his claim. Then he

added, with the winning manner that so greatly endeared him to the half-civilized race he understood so well, " Ian, will you not go with me to fight Argyle?"

But the poet shook his head. " No, no, my lord Marquis, I leave that matter with you; you go and *do* to-day, and to-morrow I will tell you what you do."

Accordingly, during the battle the young Macdonnell, who was only nineteen, stationed himself on the heights above Inverlochy Castle, and described in wild and spirited poetry the events of the day.

I will give you a verse or two of the translation:

" Heard ye not? heard ye not? how that whirlwind, the Gael,
Through Lochaber swept down from Loch Ness to Loch Eil;
And the Campbells to meet them, in battle array,
Like the billow came on, and were broke like its spray?
Long, long, shall our war song exult in that day!"

" 'Twas the sabbath that rose, 'twas the feast of St. Bride,
When the rush of their clans shook Ben Nevis's side.
I, the bard of their battles, ascended the height,
Where dark Inverlochy o'ershadowed the fight,
And I saw the Clan Donnell resistless in might."

There are some more verses, but I will only give you the last, in which he addresses his hated enemies the Campbells:

" Fallen race of Diarmid, disloyal, untrue,
No harp in the Highlands will sorrow for you;
But the birds of Loch Eil are wheeling on high,
And the Badenoch wolves hear the Cameron cry—
'Come feast ye, come feast, where the false-hearted lie.'"

Montrose was greatly cheered by his victory, and he had some reason to be proud of it, seeing it was won after a tremendously fatiguing march over a country without roads. Besides, the Marquis himself and many of the others had been obliged to go without food for eighteen hours; and just before the battle Montrose and the old Earl of Airlie thought themselves very fortunate to find some barley-meal, which they mixed with water and ate together out of an iron pot.

On the other hand, the Scottish Estates were in a great rage at their army having been defeated: their first proceeding was to declare the

Marquis a traitor for the second or third time; their next, to treat as harshly as possible all the Royalist prisoners who happened to be in their hands. Montrose, on his part, could not restrain his followers from retaliating on the lands of Argyle the cruelties practised by that nobleman in Lochaber. During this time he obtained great reinforcements, and was joined by a brave and gallant youth, George Lord Gordon, the eldest son of the Marquis of Huntly. Lord Gordon was staying at a strong fortress belonging to his father, called the Bog of Gight, and he rode over one day to the royal camp, bringing with him his wild young brother, Lord Ludovic.

CHAPTER VI.

"See how calm he looks, and stately,
 Like a warrior on his shield,
 Waiting till the flush of morning
 Breaks along the battle-field.
 See—oh, never more, my comrades,
 Shall we see that falcon eye
 Redden with its inward lightning
 As the hour of fight draws nigh.
 Never shall we hear the voice, that
 Clearer than the trumpet's call,
 Bade us strike for king and country;
 Bade us win the field or fall."

ATROUN.—*Burial March of Dundee.*

The rest of the winter campaign passed in constant skirmishes between the Scottish Cavaliers and the Covenanters, the latter being led by an experienced soldier, Sir John Hurry, who changed sides repeatedly during the war. But during the winter Montrose suffered great affliction by the sudden death of his eldest son, an amiable and promising boy of fourteen. His father had kept him with him during the last campaign, but Lord Graham was too young to stand the constant fatigue, the exposure to rain and snow, that he was obliged to endure in the rough and hasty marches of the army. Montrose had been afraid to leave him lest he should be taken prisoner, when the boy was suddenly seized with a fever at Huntly's Castle, and died in his father's arms two days later.

Not long after Montrose lost one of his best men, Donald Farquharson, in a skirmish; and he had hardly recovered from this loss

when another misfortune befell him, almost as great as Graham's death. He had left his two younger sons, Lord James Graham and Lord Robert, at Old Montrose, his own castle, when Sir John Hurry suddenly pounced down upon the place and carried off the two boys, who were quietly learning their lessons with their tutor.

During the whole of these months Montrose kept his enemies in a constant state of alarm; the rapidity of all his movements completely baffled and bewildered them; they never could find him when they pursued him, and yet when they thought him on the other side of some steep chain of hills they were generally surprised by discovering him a few miles off, the first news of his neighbourhood being an attack of his half-wild cavalry. He had till now kept to the wilder and more inaccessible parts of the Highlands, but as spring and summer advanced he received fresh reinforcements, and one day, as he was lingering on the banks of Loch Katrine, his nephew, the Master of Napier, suddenly made his appearance. Their mutual delight at meeting again was very great. And Archibald's arrival was the more welcome that he had just made his escape from Linlithgow, where he had been imprisoned with his father and several others of his family. With an army fresh and eager for battle, the Marquis now descended towards Menteith in pursuit of Hurry; but Hurry hastened to join his troops to those of the Earls of Seaforth and Sutherland; and the Marquis hearing this, halted at the village of Aulderne, not willing to fight with an army so inferior in numbers to the enemy. But Hurry was of course the more eager to encounter the lesser force, hoping to gain an easy victory, and he marched against Montrose at once.

Our hero was in a dangerous position; Hurry's army was in front, there was a large army commanded by General Baillie behind, and now to save himself from utter destruction he must beat the one before the other came up. Aulderne stood on a hill, and low hills rose up behind it. There was a rough garden in front, and in this place, behind some rocks and inclosures, Montrose placed his lieutenant, Alaster Macdonald, with his men, and gave into his care the royal standard, which was usually carried before himself, with strict orders to Alaster on no account to stir till he received the command to do so. The rest of his army he disposed on the brow of the hill, the cavalry in the middle, consisting of the best men of Strathbogie, commanded by their gallant chief, the high-spirited Lord Gordon. The enemy

began the attack, as Montrose had expected, by a furious charge of the enemy's horse against the garden where the royal banner was floating over Alaster's head, while at the same time the infantry engaged that of the Royalists. If Alaster now stood firm, Montrose's intention was to lead down the cavalry upon the enemy's centre while their right wing was engaged with Alaster, who was so strongly posted in his garden that he would easily have been able to keep his opponents back till the Marquis had cut the rest to pieces. But Alaster was not used to fighting behind walls and inclosures; many of his men were young recruits lent him by his friend Lord Gordon in exchange for some of Macdonald's tried soldiers, and these lads were with difficulty induced to keep steady under the enemy's fire; and Macdonald himself was so provoked at last by the jeering and mocking of his assailants, who dared him to come out from behind his rocks, that he could bear it no longer. Calling to his men, they rushed impetuously out of the garden and flung themselves upon the enemy. The consequence was exactly what Montrose had foreseen. Far too weak in numbers to resist the powerful cavalry of London, Lawers, and Lothian, they were beaten down, and Alaster, seeing his mistake, was obliged to give the order to his men to get back to their shelter. This retreat was so like a flight that a scene of great confusion ensued. Macdonald himself only remained perfectly cool, keeping behind to protect his men from their pursuers: it was by sheer courage and strength of arm alone that he was able to make his retreat good, and he sprang through the entrance just in time to escape being taken prisoner.

Meanwhile Montrose had been watching all this scene breathlessly from the hill where he stood, when it was whispered to him that Macdonald was completely defeated. The Marquis instantly turned round to Gordon, who was in his saddle chafing with impatience to be let loose.

"Macdonald is gaining the victory all alone!" he cried. "Come, come, Gordon, shall he carry all before him, and leave no honours for the house of Huntly?—Charge!"

The words had hardly left his lips when the gallant Gordons were thundering down on Hurry's dragoons with a force that was quite irresistible, and after a short struggle drove them off the field. To quote Napier once more: "It was well for Macdonald that Montrose and Lord Gordon came on like a whirlwind from the opposite wing,

where they had been victorious, and driving the remainder of the rebel horse even through the centre of their foot, cut down the best and bravest regiments that owned the Covenant, on the spot where they stood."

The royal standard was safe, and Alaster rushing out again from his garden assisted in completing the victory.

Montrose having so satisfactorily disposed of Hurry, now turned his attention to Baillie; but that general was so powerful that the Marquis did not judge it prudent to give him battle immediately, especially as he was anxious to engage an old acquaintance, Lindsay, who had taken the command of a third army. But at this moment he was deserted by one of Lord Gordon's brothers, the Viscount Aboyne, with almost all the Strathbogie men, his followers; and the royal lieutenant was obliged to retreat instead of attacking Lindsay.

Lindsay marched away northwards, and Lord Gordon, who was very indignant at his brother's desertion, having succeeded in bringing him back, Montrose marched in search of Baillie. The armies met at last on Alford Hill, and a battle ensued, in which the Marquis gained a glorious but dearly-bought victory.

As the fight was nearly over, Lord Gordon observed that the enemy had brought with them all the cattle they had "lifted" or stolen from his father's estates. Indignant at this piece of impertinence, the young man declared he would carry off Baillie from the midst of his men. Followed by his clansmen, he spurred his horse and dashed forward; a bound of his spirited charger brought him alongside of Baillie: he had already seized the general's sword-belt when a carbine-shot, too well aimed, passed through Gordon's forehead, and he fell. His death was well revenged by the Marquis in person, but his was a loss which could never be repaired. As the news spread through the army it was received by a universal wail of despair. Huntly's gallant son was beloved by them all, but chiefly by the Marquis of Montrose himself, who now hung over the lifeless form of his friend in bitter grief. And as he gazed through blinding tears upon the features, which even in death were singularly beautiful, he knew that he had lost the only one of the Gordons on whose fidelity and affection he could rely.

Lord Gordon was buried in the cathedral church of Aberdeen, and the funeral procession was followed by many true mourners. He

was twenty-seven years old, and had already shown great military talents.

Once more had the Covenanting army sustained a humiliating defeat, and the Scottish Estates, mortified and alarmed, were much puzzled to know what to do next. They, however, hastened to raise fresh armies, while Montrose only waited for Aboyne, who had gone off again to get reinforcements, as he said, to march down into the Lowlands. But Aboyne came not, and Montrose was only able to alarm the enemy by, as usual, appearing wherever he was least expected. But he was not able to prevent the formation of a powerful army, of which Argyle and Baillie took the joint command.

THE ROCKING-HORSE.

OUNT on your rocking-horse, Johnnie, my joy!
Stick to him close, like a bonnie brave boy!
Turn in your toes, and hold fast by the rein,
Forward and backward, again and again!

Stumble or tumble you never need fear:
Firm as an elephant, swift as a deer,
Leaping and bounding your frolicsome nag
Rises and falls, as in chase of a stag.

Never a stall does such hobby-horse need,
Straw for his bedding, or corn for his feed;
Never a currycomb; better than oats,
Painter shall give him three glossy new coats.

Sure he's not vicious—yet neighbours beware!
Look to his fore feet, and look to his rear!
Sideways stand clear too, for every one knows
If you're too near him he'll damage your toes.

Double or treble he'll carry, 'tis plain,
One at his crupper, and one at his mane;
Give *me* the saddle, though "High diddle diddle,"
All of you dub me "The fool in the middle."

KAPPA.

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